

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 773



Introduced by

REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS (Gabriela Women's Party);

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE VILIFICATION, RED-TAGGING AND HARASSMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE GABRIELA WOMEN'S PARTY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ELEMENTS OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE AND THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND RECOMMEND MEASURES TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND ADVOCATES

WHEREAS, Article III Sec. 1 of the 1987 Constitution affirms that "No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances."

WHEREAS, Gabriela Women's Party is a party-list organization duly registered with the Commission on Elections. It has duly elected representatives in the Philippine legislature since the 13th Congress;

WHEREAS, Former Barangay Kagawad Helen Araullo Tolentino, chairperson of Gabriela Women's Party - Bagac chapter was continuously harassed by elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police in her house in Bagac, Bataan;

WHEREAS, on August 10, 2019, two men wearing civilian clothes visited Tolentino's home and asked her husband regarding her whereabouts. When the husband told them that she just left, the men instead asked him about Gabriela Women's Party and what it does in the community;

WHEREAS, the two men who identified themselves as Jun Manlapaz Jr. and Jewel Fajardo from Camp Tolentino, Bataan came back the following day and managed to talk to Tolentino. They told her that she shouldn't be working with Gabriela Women's Party because of its alleged links to the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army;

WHEREAS, a letter dated Oct. 4, 2019 addressed to DILG Secretary Eduardo Año has labeled Barangay Kagawad Jenelyn Nagrampa-Caballero, current chairperson of Bicolana-Gabriela, as "sympathizer of the Left-Wing Rebel Groups particularly the CPP-NDF-NPA" for her mere participation in protest actions as women's rights activist, citing DILG Memo Circular 2018-211;

WHEREAS, individuals who introduced themselves as representatives of the Department of Interior and Local Government visited her house to inform her that they have her file on her involvement with people's organizations and progressive party lists and to warn her that as a village councilor, according to President Duterte's EO 70, she should not be dealing with these organizations as they are "against the government";

WHEREAS, Barangay Kagawad Libertad Dipon of Barangay IVC, a member of the Gabriela Women's Party, had been reported by some local government officials along with the Philippine National Police on February 10, 2020 for being a member of the "Gabriela Activist" and "engaging [in] rallies against the government";

WHEREAS, the report also states that government officials "should not engage [in] rallies against the government";

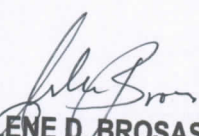
WHEREAS, the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-Elcac) under Executive Order 70 and related issuances have dangerously lumped legal activists and revolutionaries in a desperate bid to silence political dissent and clamor for real change;

WHEREAS, women community leaders, organizers, and human rights defenders in the Philippines face elevated threats of violence especially with the promotion of the culture of impunity among the police and the military;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to investigate these intensifying attacks against Gabriela Women's Party members and officers as these pose a direct threat to their rights to life and security as well as their civil and political rights;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives, through the Committee on Human Rights, conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the vilification, red-tagging, and harassment of members of the Gabriela Women's Party by the Department of Interior and Local Government, elements of the Philippine National Police, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and recommend measures to ensure the safety and protection of women's rights defenders and advocates.

Adopted,


ARLENE D. BROSAS
Gabriela Women's Party